Revised paragraph 2

2. An important consideration in examining the feasibility and utility of Mu Gia Pass area is the relatively low rate of flow of material along this route. It is estimated that southbound traffic through this area so far this year has averaged between 23 and 30 trucks per day, each carrying about 3 tons. Thus it is estimated that between 70 and 90 tons per day have moved from North Vietnam into Laos. If this quantity were to be portered over the 15 NM stretch of road in question, between 7,000 and 9,000 men would be required, each man carrying 40 pounds forward one day and returning the following day.

Revised beginning for paragraph 3

3. For the case of bombs fused for maximum road cratering, the study has led to the conclusion that 7 to 12 good weather sorties per day would result in a damage level requiring about 250 personnel to maintain the road in useable condition for truck traffic. A higher damage level would simply force the North Vietnamese to use more personnel to maintain the road and/or build new roads and bypasses. If the damage were increased to a level that required the use of more than 7,000 to 9,000 personnel to work on the roads, the North Vietnamese might then consider using the personnel to porter supplies rather than to maintain the roads. As long as the North Vietnamese employ the necessary number of personnel to fill up the bomb craters, however, conventional bombing at any level that

could be carried out probably would not force the truck traffic to stop moving, and possibly could not even reduct it below a level that the Communist forces in South Vietnam would need under conditions of escalated combat.

In any case, a large number of personnel used on the roads in either construction or portering would become a target for anti-personnel mines.

Other comments

It is suggested that the remaining paragraphs be revised in the light of the above suggested revisions. The last sentence of paragraph 5 and the conclusions need particular attention.

We agree that the use of intensive conventional bombing (5 with FMU-30 fuses) together with anti-personnel mines are probably the most effective measures possible against the Communist logistic routes in Laos, barring US/GVN occupation of the area or use of chemicals. It is not believed, however, that even ~~the use of conventional~~ bombing and anti-personnel ~~mines in Laos~~ (this program) would not prevent the Communists from getting their supplies. They would continue to repair roads, build new bypasses, improve trails whatever the cost, and possibly turn to the alternatives of infiltrating larger amounts by sea and through Cambodia.